

MONDAY – Selfishness or selflessness

(The devotion sources this week are from Adam Hamilton, “Why Did Jesus Die?”)



Matthew 16: 24 *Then Jesus said to His disciples, if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.*

Ephesians 5: 2 *Your life must be controlled by love, just as Christ loved us and gave His life for us as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice that pleases God.*

Galatians 2: 20 *I have been crucified with Christ, and I live; yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me. And that life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith toward the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself on my behalf.*

What really drives us from day to day? Is it just the instinct to protect ourselves—to make life safe, comfortable, and under control? Or is there something deeper calling us? A tug toward something bigger than us, something that asks us to live not just for ourselves, but beyond ourselves? Will I live for me, or will I live for something more?

Jesus speaks right into that moment. In Matthew 16: 24. It can sound intimidating, but it's not about hating yourself or chasing after suffering. It's saying no to the need to control, win or always come first. And taking up your cross? That's not about carrying guilt or pain—it's about stepping into your unique way of loving and

serving, even when it costs something.

Because here's the truth: an inwardly turned life—one that's always focused on what I want, what I need, what works for me—doesn't lead to freedom. It leads to loneliness, fear, and smallness. Real freedom comes when we turn outward—toward God, toward others, toward love. That's the life Jesus invites us into in Ephesians 5: 2. And Galatians 2: 20 reminds us that when we live this way, we're not alone.

Reflection: Where are you today? Stuck in your own little world, or ready to open up and follow Jesus toward something fuller, freer and far more meaningful?



Sit still for a moment. Take a deep breath. Pray:

Prayer: Jesus, help me turn outward today. Show me one small way to love like You. _ AMEN

Then stay open. That moment will come.

TUESDAY – Jesus’ self-giving our example

(Devotion sources from Mindy LaHood, COR)



Philipians 2: 4-8 *Do not let each man look upon his own things, but each man also on the things of others. For let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of*

God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

“The gap between who I am and who I’m called to be often feels impossibly wide. My self-protective instincts kick in at the slightest inconvenience—an interruption, an inconvenient request, a need that threatens to derail my plans. In these moments, my heart reveals itself, and what it reveals often leaves me ashamed. God designs divine appointments disguised as interruptions, yet I rush past them, blinded by my own agenda. What began as blessings become entitlements when I fail to acknowledge God as the source, reinforcing my self-centred perspective. This tension between flesh and spirit creates the battlefield where selflessness must be fought for daily. While I can barely sacrifice my comfort, Christ surrendered everything. His example challenges me to the core, revealing how deeply rooted self-interest is in my heart.”

“I acknowledge that becoming less selfish is work I must engage in daily. My prayer is that over time, God transforms my heart so that selflessness becomes my default rather than selfishness. This isn’t a one-time decision but a lifetime of small surrenders, each one bringing me closer to reflecting Christ’s heart for others. And in this journey, I’ve come to realise I’m not alone.”

Reflection: Do you recoil from that kind of humbling career or life path as depicted in Philipians 4: 8, or do you sense its freedom and power? How does this deepen your sense of what it means to want to “be like Jesus”? How can the kind of deep humility Jesus modelled open your heart to God’s love? How can it clear away inner barriers that may block us from loving one another?



Prayer: Lord Jesus, You chose to save me rather than preserve Your own comfort or dignity. Help me to have Your attitude in my daily life. AMEN

WEDNESDAY – Deny self, find life: Christ's example

(The devotion sources from Adam Hamilton, COR)



Matthew 16: 22-24 *Then Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, God be gracious to You, Lord! This shall never be to You. But He turned and said to Peter, Go, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you do not savour the things that are of God, but those that are of men. Then Jesus said to His disciples, if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.*

Jesus knew part of His mission was to show us by example what a fully human life looks like. When He told His closest followers that He faced death on the cross, Peter (always the most outspoken disciple) tried to talk Him out of the idea. But Jesus “doubled down,” telling Peter that ALL His followers needed to “take up their cross.” What was the point, He asked, of pursuing earthly wealth or prestige only to give up God’s offer of life in eternity? “Why would people gain the whole world but lose their lives?”

Reflection: What does it mean for you to “take up your cross” and follow Jesus? “Taking up your cross,” wrote Pastor Myron Augsberger, takes three steps: “(1) making up one’s mind; (2) giving up

one’s autonomy; and (3) taking up one’s identity.” In your spiritual journey, have you made up your mind to follow Jesus? Given up your autonomy to His leadership? Taken up your identity and purpose as a Christ-follower? Are you asking God to help you grow into each of those life choices? To what extent have you already found your true identity as you follow Christ?

Reflection: Jesus’ disciples’ initial belief that Jesus was the Messiah ruled out any idea of a cross. For what reason(s) do you think Jesus found it important to talk to His disciples in advance about His challenging way of life? Had you been one of them, how easy or hard would it have been for you to accept what He said?



Prayer: Lord Jesus, so many voices tell me that avoiding pain and sacrifice is always smart. Your call is highly counter-cultural. Let my lesser self die as I follow You into Your divine idea of greatness.
AMEN

THURSDAY – Kneeling Saviour, standing call to serve

(The devotion sources from Dr Amy Oden, Saint Paul School of Theology and Adam Hamilton)



John 13: 12-15 *So after He had washed their feet and had taken His garments and had reclined again, He said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me the Teacher, and*

Lord, and you say well, for I AM. If then I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

“The story of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet is a familiar and central feature of Jesus’ final week in Jerusalem. I’ve heard it many times, but this time what strikes me is how few words Jesus uses.

Jesus conveys a fundamental teaching to the disciples without giving a sermon or lecture. He doesn’t put a slogan on a t-shirt or a bumper sticker. He doesn’t write a blog or make an Instagram post or issue a press release. He doesn’t create a statement of principles or write a political platform to convey His teaching.

At a time when the world around me seems awash in words and more words, Jesus’ words are few, and His actions speak volumes. He embodies His instruction for the disciples – ALL of us who follow Jesus – in the

humble yet powerful act of washing their feet. He enacts love instead of talking about it. Jesus says, “I have given you an example: just as I have done, you also must do.” (John 13: 15)

Jesus’ simple act to take a towel, get a bowl of water and wash the disciples’ feet was a shocking statement that spoke louder than a thousand words.”

Reflection: In what ways do you need Jesus to “wash your feet” today? Will you allow Him to renew and refresh your spirit? To whom, on Jesus’ behalf, can you offer that service?

Reflection: Are you—am I—worried about who appears to be the greatest, or are we focused on humbly serving others?” What’s your answer? How has Jesus’ example changed it over time?



Prayer: Lord Jesus, part of me finds this prayer difficult, but I mean it. Teach me how to find my greatest glory in serving You and others in the ways You have equipped me to serve. AMEN

FRIDAY – Jesus: Pattern to follow, sacrifice to trust

(The devotion sources from Janelle Gregory and Adam Hamilton COR)



1Peter 2: 21-24 *For you were not called to this? For Christ also suffered on our behalf, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps, He who did no sin, nor was guile found in His*

mouth, who when He was reviled did not revile in return. When He suffered, He did not threaten, but gave Himself up to Him who judges righteously. He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that dying to sins, we might live to righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed.

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me”? At age nine that sounded good, but time has taught otherwise. Words most definitely hurt, sometimes more than physical pain. A cruel comment, a false accusation, or a whispered rumour can rattle around in your head for days, weeks, or even years.

When words are thrown at you, actions or even the tone in the words, revenge is close at hand, the need to vindicate ourselves, get the last word in.”

“Yet we look to the example of Jesus. Jesus knew that pain. He heard the insults, He felt the

betrayal, and He stood amid false accusations. If there was ever someone who had the right to retaliate, certainly it was Jesus! And yet He didn’t lash out—no sarcastic comeback, no cold shoulder, no passive-aggressive “bless your heart.” Just... silence. Restraint. Trust.”

Reflections: In what ways does Jesus’ example of self-giving love and courageous determination in the face of evil inspire you and shape your way of life? Are there aspects of Jesus’ example that feel like “too much,” beyond your reach? How have you learned to claim Jesus’ promise of the Holy Spirit to give you power to live differently and better?



Prayer: O Jesus, fill my heart with Your healing, peace and freedom from guilt. I thank you that Your death made that possible. I ask You to energize me for life by helping me follow Your example.
AMEN